

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1734

As Reported By House Committee On:
Health Care

Title: An act relating to licensed psychologists.

Brief Description: Subjecting licensed psychologists to chapter 18.130 RCW, the uniform disciplinary act.

Sponsors: Representatives Esser and Schual-Berke; by request of Department of Health.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 2/18/99, 2/25/99 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Subjects holders of psychology licenses to the Uniform Disciplinary Act at all times.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Cody, Democratic Co-Chair; Parlette, Republican Co-Chair; Pflug, Republican Vice Chair; Schual-Berke, Democratic Vice Chair; Alexander; Boldt; Campbell; Conway; Edmonds; Edwards; Mulliken and Ruderman.

Staff: John Welsh (786-7133).

Background:

The practice of psychology is licenced by the Department of Heath, and a psychologist must be licensed in order to refer to himself or herself as a psychologist. The Examining Board of Psychology qualifies applicants for licensure and serves as the disciplining authority for unprofessional conduct under the Uniform Disciplinary Act.

The requirements of the psychologist law do not apply to persons working in the following exempt settings: a person teaching, conducting research, or consulting in a college or university; a person holding a school psychologist credential from the state Board of Education; a person employed by a local, state, or federal agency; a person working in business not engaged in the practice of psychology; a bona fide psychology student; or a person qualified in sociology as a social psychologist.

It is unclear whether a licensed psychologist is subject to the Uniform Disciplinary Act when working in an exempt setting.

Summary of Bill:

A person who is licensed as a psychologist is subject to the Uniform Disciplinary Act at all times.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: There is a need to clarify whether licensed psychologists working in exempted settings are subject to the Uniform Disciplinary Act. While psychologists working in specified settings or circumstances are not required to be licensed, if they hold licenses, they become subject to disciplinary actions for unprofessional conduct.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Esser, prime sponsor; and Pat Brown, Department of Health.